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What Then Must We Do?

BY H. RICHARD NIEBUHR

And the multitudes asked him, saying, What then must we do? Luke 3:10.

And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? Luke 18:18.

And he called for lights and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Acts 16:29-30.

THERE are times when we ask the question, "What shall we do?" because we are bored and seek escape from inactivity. There are other times when we ask it because we confront many opportunities and as free men are called upon to make a free choice. But there are also times when the question is put to us and by us with a seriousness and an intensity wholly lacking in the cases of the free man and the bored man. We live in such a time; the people of the New Testament lived in such a time; and for us as for them the question inevitably takes on the form, "What shall I do to be saved?" We know how the multitudes felt when they heard John say that the axe had been laid at the root of the tree, for the axe has been laid at the root of the tree of modern life. We know how the young men felt who came to Jesus with the question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" for we also have known the promise of a great opportunity and are threatened with its withdrawal.

A SICK WORLD

We can no longer ask what we must do in order that we may achieve the ideal of a warless world. We must inquire far more desperately and seriously what must be done in order that we may be saved from the storm of war that is even now gathering upon the horizon. We can no longer ask what we must do in order that

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we may increase human brotherliness and kindness. Our question now is not the question of builders of the kingdom of God on earth but the question of Cain. The blood, the pain, the misery of our brothers cries up to heaven against us. What must we do to atone for this brutal common life of ours? What must we do to be saved from continued participation in the mass murders and mass thefts of modern life? What must we do as a nation to be saved from putrefaction, from the foulness of our physical and moral disease? To look out upon our world today is to understand what Isaiah meant when looking upon his nation he exclaimed, "The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it but wounds and bruises and fresh stripes." A healthy man can ask the question "What shall I do?" in one way; a sick man must ask it in an entirely different way, and we belong today among the sick.

LOST GODS

The threat against our life appears not only in the long-drawn out and ever recurrent crises which have come in the economic and political spheres; it is present also in the loss of life's meaning for individuals and for groups. There was a time when we drew significance for our existence out of the association with the great human institutions and movements. We were part of a progressing world. Democracy, science, technology, industry, church and education, called us into their service and in their signs we were to conquer. We enlisted in great crusades. But the institutions have lost their glamor as we have discovered the stuff out of which they were made and the crusades have ended as all crusades in all the past have ended—with the crusaders in possession of a tomb. We are not ready to reject these institutions and enterprises but we do not believe in them as once we did and we cannot draw from them the sense of significant living that we once enjoyed. The gods we worshipped have shown themselves to be idols, dependent upon us for their existence. Though we continue to serve them, we worship them no longer. But having lost these gods our lives are threatened with emptiness. What must we do to be saved from utter futility?

There is yet another sense in which the question of the New Testament has become intensely real for us. Not long ago we thought that we were at the beginning of a new era. We had reason to believe it; we still have reason to believe it. But we have little reason to believe that we can make the new beginning. There are times in the life of man when he glimpses before him the prospect of a new kind of existence—happier, more peaceful, more fruitful, more energetic than anything he has known before. A new life is within his reach but he finds himself unable to lay hold of it. He might realize the promise if only he knew what to do. Not knowing what to do he follows the old familiar and unsatisfactory ways and sees his vision fade into the light of common day.

It is so in the social life. A new culture, world-wide, peaceful, happy, abundant seems within our reach even now. Never were the opportunities for newness in human life so near and so enticing. Never have the bonds of peace been so numerous, the instruments of knowledge so precise, the supplies of food so plentiful, the possibilities of freedom so abounding. A kingdom has been prepared for us, but we do not have the power to take it nor the grace to receive it.

There is that within ourselves and our common life which prevents us from being what we might be. And we cannot look upon the situation with hope, thinking that we need to take only a few more steps before we

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can enter upon the promised land. We cannot look upon it with patience in the knowledge that tomorrow will give us a greater opportunity. We can regard it only with the sober conviction that so far as we are concerned, so far as our nation is concerned, so far perhaps as this present civilization is concerned the opportunity is passing and may never come again. Worse than that we know that the alternative to this better life is not simply continued existence on the old basis but disaster, be it slow or sudden. What must we do to inherit this life that is being offered and being withdrawn?

THE CRISIS OF FAITH

As our questions are like the questions of the people of the New Testament so the answers which we receive are like the answers given them. The first answer which they received was a disappointing one. They asked for something to do and they were told to believe. But they were not disappointed by it in the long run and when we look deeply into the nature of our modern crisis we will not be disappointed by it either. The politicians who told us that nothing was wrong with our country save lack of confidence were right. But they were desperately wrong when they regarded this as a light thing which

might easily be taken care of by a few homilies on the soundness of our institutions.

A crisis of faith is the deepest crisis there is and it can never be overcome by a will to believe in the very things which have failed us. Nor can it be overcome successfully by the creation of new idols. For a time the idolatry of the race or the nation or the class may be able to deliver men from their futility and give them courage and strength for their tasks. But these gods are almost as transitory as the ones they have replaced and they are no less divisive and destructive in the long run. The events of our time insist that we shall not be able to find the basis of the faith by which we can live and must live save in the "I am that I am" on which we are utterly dependent for our being and our meaning. These events wring from us again the faith which no will to believe can establish, the faith in that last reality which is our creator and our slayer.

But more than that, the answer to our question "What shall we do to be saved?" directs us to Jesus Christ. It is not the love of traditional modes of thought nor the romantic flight to medieval ways of life which makes the answer "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" a real answer for us today. Our tragedy and our sin compel us to look again to that segment of history in which sin and tragedy and the God who brings our sin to its tragic and redeeming consequences came to fullest appearance. To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ means many things, but it means this at least, that our faith is established upon no wish nor dream but upon a very bitter reality. It does not mean to believe in a kindly spirit somewhere who may help us in our more or less pious endeavors, but it does mean that we have seen the enemy and the judge of our sin as our redeemer. There are many loud voices today shouting at us to do this and to do that in order that we may be saved. But through all the turmoil the still small voice which bids us to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ carries a conviction with it that these other voices lack. Here is the beginning of our answer. How much more it entails few of us seem prepared to say today. But we wait for the fuller answer.

THE SHARING OF LIFE

There is another New Testament reply to our question which is also a contemporary reply. John said, when the multitudes questioned him, "He that hath two coats let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath food let him do likewise." Jesus told the rich young ruler to sell all that he had and to give to the poor. These are difficult words which the legalists with their ten per cent sharing and their fifty per cent sharing make no easier for us. But, apart from all legalistic interpretations of New Testament morality, we can well understand that we cannot be saved today unless we abandon the desperate effort to hold on to everything we have.

A little while ago we seemed to have embarked upon a new venture which promised much to our American life, but in how short a space of time have the high hopes, which many had, come to grief. Much of that result has been due to the desperate stupidity and fear with which men hold on to their possessions of wealth and prestige and power. There is no salvation for them nor for us all in the effort to conserve all the gains of the past, be they individual or social. More than that, we know that we cannot be saved even so far as our economic health is concerned unless there is a very broad division of the profits of our industry. The technique of that sharing economists and statesmen must work out. But the principle is more than economic and political. It is a part of the structure of things to which we must conform unless we are willing to be damned altogether.

We are not called upon to make sacrifices for the public welfare. Sacrifices may be made by those who have unusual merit. Nothing so noble or heroic as a sacrifice is required of us. What we must do to be saved is something as unheroic as the taking of bitter medicine by the patient who is not willing to die. Love and sharing is no noble privilege which good men are called upon to exercise in order that men may see their good works. It is the law of life which we have flouted far too long, the transgression of which has brought us well nigh to destruction.

BACK INTO YOUR VOCATIONS!

There is a third answer in the New Testament to the question "What then must we do?" Like the others it is utterly unheroic and quite disappointing to those who want to lead crusades and be messiahs. It is the answer of John to the soldiers and taxgatherers. It is the answer of Paul to his converts. In essence the answer is: Go back into your vocations; look for no great and mighty armies in which you may enlist but with repentance, with hardihood, with hope and with faith in God do your work as you never did it before. Repent of having made your vocation an opportunity for theft and violence. Know that the judgment has come upon all this. But do not think you can escape your responsibility by entering upon a crusade for the kingdom of God. This is also a part of the answer to the question of our time. Whatever be the events which will take place in the broad arena of history the work of the world must be done. And it is likely that the great events will take place in the quiet places where men and women do their own work as teachers, as statesmen, as mothers, as labor leaders, as preachers, as journalists, as engineers, as workers in a thousand fields with faith, with thorough repentance and with enspiriting hope.

The Evangelical–Reformed Number

This issue of The Pulpit carries eight sermons, four from ministers of the Evangelical Synod and four from ministers of the Reformed Church in the United States.

By the time this issue reaches its readers, these men will be included within the folds of one denomination, a new fellowship containing over nine hundred thousand members.

God Shares — Do We?

By William F. Kosman

"Son, thou are ever with me and all that I have is thine." Luke 15:31.

WHEN the feast of welcome was spread for the prodigal, the elder brother complained bitterly. Unlike his brother, he protested, he had been faithful through the years and had received not even a kid as his reward.

How shortsighted he was! His own lot had been by far the better one. While the prodigal was in the far country wasting his substance in riotous living, he was at home with the father, enjoying the father's companionship and sharing all that the father possessed. We can imagine the grief in the father's heart as he reminded him, "Son, thou art ever with me and all that I have is thine."

In this immortal story Jesus revealed that God shares what he is and what he has with his children. We need not look far for manifestations of this striking and dominant trait. The beauty of the earth, the loveliness and color revealed in bird, flower and sunset—what is it but something which God, who is himself the fountain head of all that is beautiful and good, shares with men? The orderliness of the universe, the uniformity and precision according to which planets move and day follows day—what is it but something which God, who is himself perfect order, shares with his children? The creativeness of life, the urge to create in response to which man builds his cities, writes his poems and translates his dreams into realities—what is it but something which God, who is himself the infinite creator, shares with his creatures?

Everywhere is to be found evidence that God is pressing in upon life, striving to impart himself to it, revealing his goodness and love—sharing himself with men.

THE SHARING CHRIST

When Jesus came as the ultimate projection of God's yearning and redeeming love into human history, he revealed this quality in the character of God in transcendent fashion. Within him dwelt the divine impulse to share. "I am come that they may have life," he said. He had a unique sense of the reality of God. So aware of God was he that it seemed to him that he and God were one. This he was eager to share with his disciples. He prayed: "As thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, so may they be in us." What peace he had! His was an inner, personal peace that in all circumstances kept him poised and self-possessed. This he bequeathed to those who were with him. "My peace I give unto you." What a sense of mission he had! Not even betrayal and death could swerve him from the doing of his father's will. This, too, he imparted to his followers: "As the father hath sent me, so send I you." Jesus proved himself one truly sent of God by sharing all that he was and had with men.

In this he made clear the Christian way of life. It is the way of sharing. When a young man came asking what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus told him the story of the good Samaritan. In it are revealed three contrasting attitudes to life. The robber who fell upon the traveler, leaving him half dead, said in effect: "What is yours is mine and I can take it." The ecclesiastic who passed by on the other side took the attitude: "What is mine is mine and I can keep it." The Samaritan gave succor to the needy because he believed, "What is mine is yours and we can share it."

INTELLIGENT SELF-SHARING

The man who takes the attitude of the robber can by no possible stretch of the imagination be regarded as a disciple of Jesus. He may be a disciple of the robber barons who in Jesus' day and in ours prey upon their fellows but he can never be considered a disciple of Jesus who gave himself a ransom for many. The man who takes the attitude of the ecclesiastic can by no stretch of the imagination be regarded as having kinship with Jesus. He may be kin to Nebuchadnezzar, that ancient pagan, who as he paced the roof of his palace in Babylon, exulted: "Is not this my Babylon created with the power of my might for the honor of my majesty?" But he can have no kinship with Jesus who gave himself for us and for our salvation. Only he who takes the attitude of the good Samaritan and shares himself, his strength, his substance; only he in whom there is the same impulse that was in Jesus and that rests back in the heart of God can be considered truly a Christian. It is the disposition to share that makes our professions of Christianity vital and redeems them from futility. Intelligent self-sharing is the ethical demand that true Christianity makes upon us.

Who, touched by the spirit of Jesus, has not experienced this divine compulsion! When privileged to stand in the presence of beauty, whether at the seashore drinking in the glory of the pale moon upon the water, or in the mountains watching light and color glow like an evening sacrifice upon the low-lying clouds; or in a foreign land beholding some priceless symbol of the deep and noble thoughts of men; or under the spell of great music, noble drama or masterful preaching that opened the gates to heaven—who privileged to stand in the presence of such beauty has not suffered poignant grief because he could not then and there share it?

WORSHIP

Must we not experience something of the same feeling while attending divine worship in the house of God? Much is being said in these days concerning the lack of church attendance. Undoubtedly multitudes of church members throughout the land are absent far too often. But many do come Sunday after Sunday. Manifestly, they come because they find something that, in spite of the poverty of our preaching and the slovenliness of our ritual, feeds the soul—some impartation of God himself; something that clears the mists for them and lets them see the heart of things.

Who enjoying this blessed privilege does not find his thought going out to those who are not present? How much we miss them! If they were with us all our worship would take on added meaning; prayer and hymn would be more inspiring and preaching more vital. The very atmosphere would be more pregnant with the pres-

ence of God, because of the beneficient contagion of fellowship in the exercises of worship.

To the extent that we yield to the spirit of Christ, to that extent are we under the divine compulsion to share. As we think of him we think of those with whom he identified himself. As we raise our eyes to his face and see reflected there the infinite compassion and ineffable love of the Father, something of the same compassion and love is born in us. As we experience the depth and height and reach of his love, we too begin to love. The divine life passes into us and through us into the life about us. The saints become sharers. The privileged become bearers of privilege. The redeemed become redeemers.

Is there any other way in which men can be saved? All about us are men and women who need nothing so

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much as to come into vital touch with those through whom God's presence and power can impart itself.

It has recently been said that the weakest point of organized religion is that its concern has been to judge and evaluate acts rather than to understand and help the individual who acts. This is an indictment to which, one suspects, the church must plead guilty. We have not understood what modern psychology is making clear: that the individual's behavior is largely the result of his emotional evaluation of events and circumstances without and of his emotional reaction to the instinctive drives within. He may not always be responsible, therefore, for his behaviour. He is never a being who knows everything and for reasons of mere stubbornness, total depravity or love of evil deliberately chooses the wrong. When he behaves as he does he may be trying to dissolve inner conflicts or to make satisfying adjustments to the demands of life about him or driving instincts within. He needs not condemnation but understanding and help.

The church, therefore, serves men best not when she judges them; not when she condemns the sinner and canonizes the saint, but when she understands men and gives them intelligent and sympathetic guidance and help, sharing with them knowledge and purpose and hope, mediating to them something of the life and love which God would impart to his creation. Jesus came not to condemn the world but to save the world.

Some years ago I had the privilege of standing before the original of Holman Hunt's "The Light of the World" in the chapel of Keble College at Oxford. There is a story that when the picture was completed a visitor asked the artist to show him the latch on the door. "Ah," replied the artist, "in this picture the latch is on the inside." So we have always supposed. We have gone on the assumption that the person who dwells on the inside has the power to open the door if he so wills and admit the guest who knocks and that those who refuse to do so are moved by stubbornness and self-will. To be sure, this may really be the case. Jesus apparently thought this was true of the Pharisees of his day for he said to them, "Ye will not come to me that ye may have life." It is becoming ever more clear, however, that in very many cases there is a possibility that the person who dwells within the house where the Christ knocks may be deaf and cannot hear, or he may be crippled and cannot open. Before he can do either he must be made to hear and to walk. "People are infants, most of them," says a writer in speaking of the significance of this painting in a recent periodical. "They are infants who enjoy the knocking perhaps but who do not know its meaning, who would love beyond words the one who does the knocking and the spiritual adventure to which he calls if only they could grow up sufficiently to see the latch and catch its relationship to a wider world."

A SPIRITUALLY ORIENTED LIFE

When the church once yields fully to the divine compulsion to share, she will seek to understand individuals as Jesus understood them, taking into account their problems and frustrations and helping them by guiding their development intelligently and sympathetically into a rational and spiritually oriented life.

To do this she will share with the least and the humblest eagerly and gladly. All the privileges of insight and courage, all the potencies of inspiration and hope which are hers in Christ Jesus, she will give freely. The Christian mission will be infinitely more than church expansion or the foisting of the cultural forms of western civilization upon oriental peoples. It will become increasingly the sharing of the Christ, his spirit, his point of view, his love of God and men, with other races and nations. The church will be the channel through which the divine life will flow. Christian education will be infinitely more than the mere impartation of religious knowledge or the passing on of denominational and dogmatic formulas of belief. It will be an actual sharing of personality and life by the teacher with his pupils, the preacher with his congregation. Teacher and preacher will be bearers and sharers of life. They will carry the torch of faith and hope and love by which to

light the torches of other and younger lives. Christian discipleship will become increasingly the radiation and infusion of the spirit and power of the Christ who, after the manner of the prophet of old, felt himself annointed to "preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind and to set at liberty them that are bruised."

THE GOOD LIFE

Certainly, the futility of a worldly strategy is painfully evident in these days. It cannot be gainsaid that the good life requires a degree of material well-being. Notwithstanding the immortal example of St. Francis, poverty can have no other effect than to kill the soul's aspirations for beauty and truth and the higher glory of life. However apt the deceitfulness of riches may be to kill the spirit, the ideal of the kingdom can never be that of a house swept bare of all human comforts and necessities. At any rate it would not seem that God intends this to be so. He has made the earth marvelously fruitful. He has stored the hills and valleys with almost inexhaustible resources of fuel and metal and has enabled man to exploit and utilize them by endowing him with productive skill and inventive genius. Evidently God intends that all his children shall have all the material and physical resources necessary to the good life. It is equally evident, also, that God intends that men shall and can have them only as they share them. "Observation of the conditions and consequences of the ever repeated attempts of men through the ages to find the good life," says Dr. Wieman, "seems to make one fact plain. This supreme good can be attained only as men share their experiences, their visions, their techniques, their materials, their insights, their discoveries. Only through cooperation and good will, through the stimulating exchange of ideas and inventions and through deep community of heart and mind, does the greatest possible good slowly dawn."

GREED GENERATES RUIN

How evident this has become through the present economic crisis! Increased production without a sufficient sharing of the profits of such production so that increased consumption can become possible has brought catastrophe upon all. It must be clear to the dullest that the good of one is the good of all and that no one can possess unless there is sharing by all.

The very fact that, while there is plenty, increasing numbers are facing starvation makes it evident that self-seeking and greed generate ruin for all. In the end, mankind will enjoy the fruits of the field and the products of industry only on conditions that God himself lays down.

Never, therefore, was the hour so ripe for the Christian church to insist that the common good is paramount, that greed must be restrained and the unwonted assumption of power and privilege by the strong must come to an end. The very necessities of the situation makes it imperative that mankind now turn to the way of sharing, as advocated by Jesus Christ. In Galilee twenty centuries ago and in every age since he has been saying: "He that saves his life shall lose it and he that loses his life shall find it."

The Church's Hour of Crisis

By S. D. Press

Jacob himself was left behind all alone. Genesis 32: 24.

TO GAIN a truly helpful perspective of the world in which we live today we need the God-centered faith of the great pioneers of our rugged biblical religion. We need a faith which is anchored in the eternal. We are passing through an age of sweeping transition, deeper and more thoroughgoing than any previous one. The world-encircling occurrences of this day have their center of gravity not in one or the other hemisphere. They extend over the whole globe. They are not localized but universal. Once again we are made to realize that the fate of humanity is linked with the fate of the world. All the nations are in travail. Is it birthpangs or death-throes? Have we entered a last stage of development or are we at the threshold of a new age?

The revolutionary changes reverberating from all corners of the earth in the present do not result merely from the operation of recognizable elemental physical forces and human factors. They are not merely economic and social upheavals but they have a deeper spiritual background. The extent and magnitude of the historical transformations going on before our eyes lift them beyond the power of man. The role of man has become a very modest one in the face of the chaotic world conditions of today. Thrown upon his own resources, man stands completely helpless over against the apparently incalculable forces and the intricate processes which are fashioning history anew. The place assigned to him today is not that of an independent actor but, at best, that of an obedient learner. It is not civilization in the making that is going on, it is the Lord of history going through the world. Surely, if God is in this thing, then it is indeed a welcome time, not a time for faithless fears but for exulting hope, a time that will bring the day of deliverance to the world's oppressed peoples. Therefore everyone in the world today who holds a living connection with Jesus Christ must experience a new sense of the abiding reality of the church of Jesus Christ in its world mission.

GOD THE ENEMY

The work of the church is not done; it has only begun. Her mission is not something apart from world development. Therefore no world situation can arise that will make the church superfluous. Her apparent impotence in the present turmoil does not negate her divine charter. But it does reveal that the human perplexity of many within the church is just as great as that of those outside the church. God knows how weak we are, but we also need to know it. Man's perplexity, the manifestation of the futility of all merely human efforts, is God's opportunity for the revival of the church of his Son. It is the church's hour of crisis, an hour like that which Jacob experienced at the ford of Jabbok. It was night all around him and inside of him

when Jacob went out to be alone with God. The God he met was not God the friend, but God the enemy. It became for him the hour of reckoning. That night his whole past life, including his self-made religion, went to pieces. Jacob the self-made man with all of his cunning and his poisoned piety was judged and condemned. So terrific was the struggle that the scars were never again to disappear from his being. But he won in that he was conquered by God. As a new man, no longer Jacob,

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but Israel, he came forth at the break of day in the face of the rising sun. If the church in the night of this fateful hour, in this Gethsemane of the human race, will go out to meet God as Jacob did, she also will come forth in the rising of her sun, and her world will see the light of a new day.

CHURCH MUST BREAK UNHOLY ALLIANCE

However much the church here on earth may have become enmeshed in the ways of the world, the hour has come for her emancipation from every kind of unholy alliance. When she has learned to despair of herself, of her man-made religion, she will lay hold exclusively on her holy calling, she will embody her heavenly vision in her new life. She must have done with her past sinful ways by an honest repentance on the part of the pulpit and pew alike. She can not rise to her world-mission to be the salt of the earth, the light of the world, by the leadership of men of provincial minds, whose horizon is picayunishly and even sordidly earthbound, men who can envisage no higher goals than their own personal or clannishly denominational affairs. The church's mission is for men who have a world-mind, whose lives are anchored in a heavenly citizenship, in the new order of things, men who habitually live above earth's timberline, above the sway of vacillating human thought currents, and yet who incarnate the throbbing heart of humanity in their being.

Such men are born from above but not by magic or accident. They are born from contact with him whom Jacob met at midnight who is greater than the human heart; they come out of the following of him who is the way, the truth, the life.

PAUL'S PORTRAIT OF JESUS

Let us pause for a moment to hear God speak to us through Paul's portrait of Jesus Christ transposed into our own day. It is in the perspective to which eternity is the only horizon that we must survey the life of him, whom we acknowledge as the great pioneer of our religion, as the author and perfecter of our faith.

No other person in history has gained such cosmic significance as he. The secret of his personality revealed in his life from Bethlehem to Bethany, the hidden source of his unfailing power among men was just this—that his whole being was rooted in the divine. In his presence all men were made to feel the presence of the eternal. For once there was in the midst of men a man whose character and will were completely at one with God, who owned no other allegiance than that which gave him the kingship of truth, who lived by no other reputation than that which made him the prince of righteousness. The marvel of it all is that he was this as a man among men, as one of our own kin; that as one who shared our flesh and blood, who ate and drank with sinners and publicans, he was the light of the world; that in a world governed by selfishness, the greed for personal gain and honor with its consequent of social injustice, he lived a life of spotless purity and gave himself with complete selflessness at the price of his soul for the establishment of a divine society of men, the kingdom of brotherly love.

Though being on an equality with God, Jesus Christ claimed no position which would make him superior to his fellowmen by virtue of an office. The divine credentials which intrinsically belonged to his nature he refused to exploit for purposes other than redemptive living. So completely did he overthrow all outward accreditations of divinity in assuming the character of a servant that he knew not how to help himself because he thought only of helping others.

Surely, Paul would say, a ministry of selfish exploitation in any sense, whatever its official credentials may be, has no claim on Christ's name; a church that has ceased to exist for the poor and downtrodden has lost its Christian charter.

THE COMPASSION OF JESUS

Nor could Jesus Christ possess goodness in a way that would depreciate the value of another man's soul. His holiness was not of a kind that could become a barrier between him and the lost whom he had come to seek and to save. In judging and condemning the sins of men he treated them as such that needed a physician. However hopeless men were, Jesus never despaired of them but loved them to the end. Though he hated the sins of the world and in no sense acquiesced in conditions as they were, but fearlessly fought the terrible evils of

society and mercilessly exposed the wickedness of men without the slightest concern for his own life, yet he pitied not himself but them. He spared not himself but vicariously suffered their sin to the point of giving his own soul as a ransom for theirs. Men might resist his goodness, malign his righteous nobility, impugn the purity of his motives, ignore his unselfish services, but they could not defeat his love; they could hate him and put him to death but they could not stop him from loving them.

GOD IS AGAINST US!

And now let us ask ourselves, Is Paul's Christ ours? Has the church of today still a claim on him? Before we make that tremendous claim, we must realize with deep humiliation that God is against us. Yes, God is against us as he was against Jacob at the ford of Jabbok. Not only against our all too obvious sins, against our sanctuaries dominated still so much by mercenary motives and greed for honor with all the corruption entailed thereby. God is against the hypocrisy of our so-called Christian civilization, its claim to be for all the people and yet doing nothing radical for the least of Christ's brothers, those that still live in the world's dark cellars. God is against such anomalies as a church that claims to be the custodian of the spiritual heritage of the race and yet fails to lift up her voice unafraid against the despoilers of elemental justice and plain righteousness, hesitates to take to task with consuming wrath those in her very midst who ignore the humanitarian instincts of pity, mercy and goodness. How can God give strength to the church's banner if she refuses to engage seriously in holy wars?

OUR SUPREME SIN

God is self-evidently against our sins, but he is also against our very religion, our piety. The supreme sin of religion is what has been called the sin of anthropomorphism. We have brought God down to our own plane; we have sought to make him the servant of our self-chosen causes; we have tried to identify him with our own human plans and programs. We invent procedures and expect him to sanction them; we thank him for his blessings when we really mean our own achievements; we expect him to answer our prayers, not that his will may be done but ours. Little wonder that the church has failed to act courageously in the present crisis. God can not back her unless she is ready to be owned by him. Yet valiant action is urgently needed. God expects the church to act courageously, to triumph gloriously. But to act courageously with God is to do not the ordinary things that human wisdom and valor can do, but to do the impossible, which is, to love your enemies like Jesus did, to transcend all human barriers of race and color and caste, to touch the untouchables, to eradicate the profit motive, to die unto self. The Jacob in us must die before Israel can be born. Faith always deals with the impossible and that is the sphere in which the church has her work. She must constantly expect the really great things of God and habitually dare the truly great things for him. Life is not small. Life is big.

A Pastoral Prayer

By Reinhold Niebuhr

OUR FATHER, though the heavens can not contain thee thou dost dwell with those who are of a contrite heart. In thy sight the proud are abased and those who humble themselves are exalted. In thy presence all our deceits and disguises are without avail, for thou settest our secret sins in the light of thy countenance and we become conscious of all our vanities and cheap ambitions. Save us from pride and arrogance so that in thy presence the vision of what we might be will convict us of what we are.

When we penetrate the central mysteries of life in thy presence contrition and gratitude mingle in our hearts, for we see the evils of life which we create and suffer to exist, but we also realize the beauty of the world which thou hast made. We thank thee for everything about us which ministers to our better nature: for the greatness and glory of the world, for the majesty and serenity of nature and for the infinities which carry our imagination beyond the limits of our comprehension. We thank thee for the history of our race with its glimpses of nobility amidst human sin, and for every assurance that though we are mean and petty we are not wholly so. We praise thee for the beauty wrought by craftsmen and artists and for all symbols of perfection which disturb our ease and incite our ambition. We are grateful for the songs of faith sung by thy children in every age and for the heritage of faith bequeathed to us, so that, when we are perplexed, we are not perplexed unto despair. We thank thee for the pressure of duty and for the discipline of responsibilities. Above all we thank thee for the Lord of life whose tragic majesty wins ever and again from our hearts an ennobling affection and who, being lifted up, lifts all men unto him.

Have mercy upon us for appropriating so rich a life with so little concern for those to whom beauty and joy are denied, whether by the cruelties of nature, the inhumanities of men or by their own limitations. Since we are debtors both to the wise and the unwise, teach us to discharge our debts to those who have given us much by serving those who need us greatly.

Teach us to know that the perils and pains through which our generation is passing are the just deserts for our sins and those of our fathers. Reveal thyself to us in our daily life that we may know thee as the prophets have known thee—a God of both wrath and mercy. So may we be moved to contrition by thy wrath upon our sins and to gratitude by thy sustaining mercy.

In all things subject us to the spirit and the mind of Christ in whose name we pray. Amen.

Christ Our Religion

By E. G. Homrighausen

". . . But we preach Christ crucified . . . the power of God and the wisdom of God. . . . I Corinthians 1:34, 24.

"For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." I Corinthians 2:2.

"And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." Acts 4:14.

IT was upon the absolute and uncompromising dogmas of these verses that the Christian society was founded. And there is no other reason for the existence of the Christian church and tradition, than Christ Jesus, crucified and risen! Upon this simple absolute the past, living present and future of Christianity depends. Christianity is Jesus the Christ, a historic personality, in whom centers and around whom revolves a strange and inexplicable radiance of divine and human reality. Those who had every reason to let their judgments about him be corrected by their proximity to him in the flesh saw in him the only adequate reason for human and divine existence.

They saw in him the absolute of human existence, the ultimate fulcrum of life, the judge of humanity, the inmost truth about God and man, the founder of a new race of humanity, the reconciliation of life's baffling paradoxes, the proffered act of God, the only worthy Lord of human devotion, and an object through which they inevitably, through worship and faith, were led to the center of satisfying and challenging reality.

And the marvel of it all is that the human Jesus was a peasant, a provincial, who had not enjoyed the benefit of rabbinical schools. He was a Galilean of questionable nationality, a resident of an obscure Roman province, an associate with common and insignificant folk, and one who, according to every outward appearance, was anything but the Christ of God, with whose advent we should expect the accompaniment of pomp and power and glory. There is no paradox like unto this!

But paradox or no paradox, the fact remains that we may analyze, criticize, utilize, or dilute this Christ, and in the end, he rises up more majestic than before, for resident in him is a mysterious reality that lives by the sheer sovereignty of its own nature. And no matter how men attempt to explain him down or away, or wrap him up in the grave clothes of ecclesiastical theology or polity, he has a way of silently freeing himself from them and "going on before." For Christ is more than human system and form. He exists as a reality that is true in itself, and does not rest for its substantiation upon human evaluation. He will be himself or nothing. And though we usurp his sovereignty for selfish ends, and place him at the periphery of our little systems, he will have the central place or forsake us and our systems.

I.

Christ is our religion because he is first of all a sovereign and stubborn fact. He is a new emergence into this world of ours. He forever stands as a fact which cannot be dethroned any more than the sun. He was! He is! He will be! At a point in history, the history of which we are an organic part, he emerged, and he has been a pivot and fulcrum of a new life in history ever since. That is an inescapable fact. In him and through him a new humanity began. He injected a serum of superhuman vitality into the hardening arteries of humanity. According to our best moral judgment another Jesus has not appeared since or before. We feel that another such Christ would require a unique creation on God's part to produce again. Nobody has approximated the dazzling clarity and originality of his spirit, and those who have followed closest have been most conscious of his distance from them. And the closer we come to Jesus, the more convinced we are of his Christly mystery.

He is such an arresting fact that those who are most conscious of life's mysteries infer by the logic of their innermost selves that he is an act of God—a direct projection of the life of God into our world-consciousness.

We see his life so burdened with the reality of God, so freighted with grace and truth, so weighed down with the central problem of wayward humanity, so steadfast in tested hope, so united with God, that when we would know the truth about life's ultimates we instinctively turn to him. We are astonished at his audacious words about being one with the Father, but in observing him we acknowledge that he has the right so to speak. He proclaims forgiveness to sinners with such authority that we would revolt should another claim such power—but we willingly grant to him that divine prerogative. We listen to his simple words, so filled with eternal wisdom, and in pondering and obeying them discover that they are truth and life. And in all things that pertain to those rock-bottom facts of human life we can think of none other who proclaims them with such unaffected and genuine authority, or incarnates them with such ultimacy and grace. He gives us such a perfect reciprocal answer to our search for God that it seems to require no proof or argument. We believe him—because we believe him! There is no other reason. He is what he is—because he is! And he is the fact he is, not because we humans have made him so. He is the sovereign fact he is, because he came from God.

For that reason he is not a "value," or an estimate that we put upon him. That would give him merely a humanly determined and utilitarian value. He is not our Christ, but God's. He is not of us merely. He is for us. Though he is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, there is something about him that we have not created. It has been given as a gift. It defies our knowledge and power and can be believed and accepted, reverently taken and appropriated, allowed to be its true self, admitted to be sovereign, but it never can be selfishly utilized, boldly controlled, or rudely analyzed.

So Christ is our rock and cornerstone; he is the message and word of God; he is the God-sent; he is the yea and amen to mankind; he is the answer to our question; he is the fact of God.

It is this Christ that gave us the Jesus of history; this Christ that gave us Paul, the church, and Christian experience.

II.

But Christ is no mere suspended sovereign fact. He is historic and present power and wisdom. He is social and individual Way, in which both are so intimately welded together that to sever them is to kill them. The Acts and the gospels might be continued until this day, and the chronicle of the power of Christ in life would actually fill books, "which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain" them. In spite of the varying interpretations of Christ, his reality has made its impact. For the fact of him has been greater than the logic of him!

His peculiar power is in his ability to reach men. He defies time, space, race and environment. When Christ is confronted in all his pure reality, men become conscious of their real problem, which is fundamentally human and divine. Men come to him for various reasons, but before long they discover that he comes to them. He will not let us approach him with silly questions. He has a way of studying us, and of walking right out of the gospels, possessed of a disarming dogmatism about life's ultimates. He will never let us argue coolly about God and life, but realistically he tells us, as he did Nicodemus, that God is not known by aimless forums and debates, but by actively and honestly striking out on a new track.

Following implies repentance; it implies implicit faith in him; it implies intimate life with him as I daily identify myself with his mind and heart. I seek to live "in Christ." This is not neo-Platonism. Neither is it stern ethical theism of the Kantian variety; nor is it noble Stoic idealism; nor is it mystical Spinozism, intellectual Hegelianism, or social Spencerianism. It may be like some of these, but in reality it is something quite unique, for none of these systems possess the balance between personalism and moralism. It is a "Christ mysticism" in which one's whole being is involved in a believing, not a critical, faith. It is like the life of the branch in the vine, of the sheep in the fold, of the son in the paternal household. And only in the measure with which we "come unto" him does he come unto us. Only as we make our own his life, his mind, his love, his faith, his suffering care, his voluntary cross, his sin-bearing crucifixion and his desperate hope in God, can we know what it means to call Christ our religion. Those who have done so have been remarkably raised from their dead selves and assured by a mysterious knowledge of the power and the wisdom of this way.

Lest anyone should think that Christ is a mere individual Way, let us remember that he is also a fellowship. But Christ is no mere promoter of principles of a social gospel or of a church organization. He is the fountain of a new fellow-consciousness. With him, life is an existence of identity with comrades. Christ offers us no social "ism," but he does offer us a social dynamic. He is no new legalistic code. He is the creator and generator of a new life of loving instinct. Those who make him their religion, not only eat and drink his life with God, but also his intimate life with publicans and sinners. They do not live apart from their fellows, filling their "barns" with goods and priding themselves that they have need of no man—but by taking upon themselves common humanity, they live in a new comradeship with all men. There is no social gospel so simple. And it is a social gospel that adapts itself to the relativities of life because it is spirit and life, and not a legal code.

Many of the arguments for the existence of the church need but Christ for a central inspiration. "Was Paul crucified for you?" Was Apollos crucified for you —or Luther, or Campbell, or Wesley, or Calvin, or Knox, or Eddy, or Smith, or Hubmaier—or Peter? The church is the inevitable and sacramental fellowship of the new humanity which inheres in Christ. It is simpler than Roman ecclesiasticism and more sacred than Protestant sectarianism. Indeed, Christ is our religion because he is our fellowship and our ultimate society.

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III.

But Christ is more. He is our hope for the future. The whole of life's structure rests upon this hope. If there is no God behind and hidden within all things, who shall some day come out of his hiding and reveal himself, then what is the use of noble living? Judged by the bare facts of life and history there is no certain proof of the personality or existence of God. Man by his natural reason runs every fact into an alley of inscrutable mystery. There is no way from man to God at all! Death, yes, even the death of a good man, is certain, and the door of life closes upon the epic of his career—and there is no latch on the human side! There is no way through that portal unless there is a God who opens it from his side out! It is this sure expectation in Christ that keeps religion vigilant and virile. It is the apocalyptic essence of the gospel; it is the eschatological core of Christianity. It makes Christianity a futuristic religion, a religion of redemption, of forgiving grace,

of hope and joy. Take this theology of the coming God out of Christianity and it becomes a mere sociology, an ethical system of high expediency, a philosophy that rises no higher than our noble moral systems.

This future hope we believe was declared to us in Christ. He is the yea and amen of the living God. Through him we take heart and go on. If ever there was an assurance extended to a doubting and imperfect humanity as to the future and grace of God, it was in Christ Jesus. His cross and tomb will forever stand as the worst enigma to the man who hopes to find through natural reason and scientific method the existence of a good and a victorious God. While these methods may lead to the vestibule of reality, they have no power to bring one into the holy of holies.

But—in Christ a door has been opened! The latchet has been lifted. Now we know that God is on our side. And even though our critical capacities may stumble at the array of details connected with the resurrection, yet the crucified Christ has been made Lord through the resurrection fact. While men may still continue to cling to Jesus even though he may not have been raised, yet the probabilities are that they would by this time have forsaken him. Unless Easter is true, then he died in vain, his authority is shattered, and the church has been founded on a farce. Then his agony and work are sheer mockery, then the universe is a hollow echoing hell of demons; then men are motivated by something beyond their created environment that cynically mocks their hopes! If Easter be not true, then life is a farce, and those who dared in his name are fools.

But Easter is true. It is truer than we are, for it is the last and ultimate fact about life and the world. Easter is God! The struggle is worth while! And though the world judge us fools, we glory in our foolishness, because to every believing person it is the wisdom and the power of God! Though the kingdom is not manifest in a social manifestation that can be regulated like a system of politics, we know in faith that Christ is the truth about life, that God is in the midst of life. In him the world coheres. He is promise and he is hope. In him is the centrifugal power which moves the whole creation toward himself.

He has brought life and immortality to light. He has done something which we could not do for ourselves. In him God has made himself available to those of humble and obedient faith. Because of that, Christ is my metaphysic, my ethic, my ecclesiology, my philosophy, my apologetics, my science, my astronomy, my sociology, my theology—yes, my life, my death, my future, my all! And I will feel that when I come to the place where I can so accept him that my old ego is completely offered, I will be able to preach upon the text, "For me to live is Christ." Then I will have fully accepted him as God's own act to me, God's own Way for me, and God's own future beyond me! Then I will see my whole life carried, as it were, by the everlasting arms, and say with Markham that I am ready for anything, because nothing can happen to me, for I am Christ's and he is God's and God is all in all! My righteousness will no longer be my own striving, but God's—for now God has me on his hands! That is Christ! That is eternal life! That is wisdom and power of God. What seems like a complete abandoning of life in a reckless faith turns out to be life at its noblest and best. Then my mind, having found its Lord, functions with highest creativity. Then my heart no longer fears, and my will is energized by instincts that have their roots in Christ, who is God. For Christ is no stereotype. He is creator of "saved" personalities, who are not automatons but original and individual pioneers in a new way of life.

IV.

Much has been said recently about the plight of Christianity. The only plight of Christianity is that it has taken its eyes off Christ. It does not uncompromisingly make him central. It hopes to use him as one foundation stone along with others in the structure of modern Christianity. There can be no recovery of Christian power and wisdom, no emergence of an "ascetic church," no church unity, no militant faith, until Christians again realize that Christ is the sole reason for and power of Christianity, who must be central, even though that means the passing of much that is now associated with the church.

There can be no recovery of convincing preaching until preachers are more certain of Christ than of their own moods and knowledge. There can be no new spirit of independence of the church from the whole capitalistic and social order with which it has so closely identified itself, until it returns to its first love, to its original Christ-theology, its sole justification for existing. There will be no relief from financial difficulties so long as the church allows itself to be supported by any plan that does not have the crucified Christ uncompromisingly at the center. And the church will never become a power which governments will fear to control unless it first realizes that its inherent life resides in a radical Christ from God, and not in a half humanistic Christ whose message and power can scarcely be distinguished from what Paul More calls a "sentimental socialism." The church will possess no power to recreate the social order so long as its leaders become greater experts on politics and revolution than on cross-bearing and life-changing faith. Mere changes of social structure never can create a new attitude.

In Christ there is life. But the sad part of history is that men prefer to walk the path of self-sufficient conceit, because they will not admit they need help from God! We prefer to build our own lives and our own world. We do not want to admit we need to receive something from another. We do not like God's Christ —we prefer the Jesus of history who leaves us where we are! But Christ? He makes us humble. He bids us repent and come to him. He will not be used! For Christ means that we must confess our need before we can find the Way. We must let God be God! This is the crisis of this generation—and the church!

"But we preach Christ . . . crucified . . . the wisdom and power of God." There is one only Christ! He is religion itself! He is power. He is wisdom. He is God.

Finding, following, keeping, struggling,
Is he sure to bless?
Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs,
Answer, "Yes."

Lambs Among Wolves

By L. W. Goebel

"Go your ways; behold, I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves!" Luke 10:3.

As in every day of special stress, many people today insist that we have come to the end of an era. Others go beyond this and repeat the claim which has been made throughout the Christian age that the signs of the times indicate the speedy end of all time. The background for both contentions is one of pessimism, even though those who advance it speak of a new day, or a new heaven and a new earth. One group puts its trust in coercion and the other in the coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Both are the legitimate children of those preachers who in the day of our youth concluded every prayer with the words, "and protect us Lord in these last evil days."

Over against those who occupy this position there are the equally shallow optimists who insist that we are living in a day of unusual opportunity. For the followers of Christ every day is a time of great opportunity. Our text follows the words of Christ in which he says, "The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest." Jesus looked out upon a world of which he knew that for his followers it contained a great opportunity. Always, however, there were only a few who were ready to take advantage of exceptional opportunities. The laborers still are few. It was but yesterday that the church prayed, "God give us men." Today we pray, "God give us money." In the face of the opportunity which is ours we ought to pray "God give us faith."

The Christian church certainly should be quite generally agreed that whether the pessimist is right, who sees no hope for the future excepting in some manner of forceful intervention by men or God; or whether the optimist is right, who insists that this is a day of great opportunity, surely this is a day of unusual responsibility. As Christians, we are convinced that neither can the individual life fulfill its high purpose, nor society in general rise to new and greater heights because of the new opportunities with which it is confronted, unless men live by faith in the eternal God. Not to prove that there is a God, but to interpret the God whom we have come to know; to persuade men that in this God there is healing and redemption for the individual and for society, that is the good news which ushers in a new day. To proclaim the gospel of the kingdom which is come nigh unto men—that is the divine commission given to all who are sent forth as lambs in the midst of wolves.

In fulfilling this commission the individual Christian must, of course, "go his own way." He has his own contribution to make to the life of our day. Life is quickened by life. The impact of personality on other personalities is the power which moves the world. Contracts and agreements have no value unless they are supported by dependable personalities. International pacts and constitutions of nations are unable to stand up when they are pitted against the power of strong personalities. Parliamentarianism vanished in Italy with the advent of Mussolini, and the Weimar constitution became a scrap of paper when Hitler's personality caught the imagination of the German people. In the religious drama, "Judas Iscariot," Lois, the sister of Judas, bursts into her father's house and breathlessly tells of her first meeting with Jesus of Nazareth. They ask, "What does he say?" and she answers, "He speaks of love as the law of the kingdom." Then they ask, "What are his exact words?" She answers, "What does it matter? It is he that counts." Such is the power of personality either for good or for evil.

The influence of a Christian personality is, of course, largely determined by the experience of the grace of God, transmitted as a blessed heritage, through the channel of the church. In a sense the church's message always is the message of the individual Christian. There is some truth in the contention of the Roman church that the religion of the group is a living force and that it exerts its influence for good even when those who are religious in the group are not very religous as individuals. Nevertheless we know that only the life which has made the Christian gospel its own personal experience and its own vital message and which longs to share this experience with others can make the impact of its personality definitely felt for the renewing of the life of individuals and of society as such. Such a message will be more than a tradition. It is a glorious new revelation. It is always foolish to speak of a new message for a new age. Where there is a real message, that message however old is always new when new life is brought to bear upon new situations.

Our day has been emphasizing the need of new ideals and new principles. It has insisted that we must understand and interpret anew the ideals and principles of Jesus. It has put its trust in pacts and agreements and has minimized the power of dynamic personalities. Yet the most ardent supporters of the social gospel often have sought their inspiration in the lives of the saints of the catholic church. St. Francis of Assisi has been so popularized that suddenly he has come to be a living personality to almost every American church audience. This is a striking illustration of the fact that men recognize the irresistible power inherent in the lives of great souls. "Go your way," says the Master. For good or for evil you will influence the world about you in a manner in which no one has ever influenced it before. You have your own unique contribution to make to the life of the world. That is inescapable. We can be sure of influencing the world for good only if while we go our own way we yet know ourselves to be sent by him whose followers we profess to be.

It is the living Christ who this day comes to his church and to individual Christians with the challenge "Behold I send you forth." The power of a Christian personality is that of a God-enlightened and God-motivated personality. It is that of a life filled with a divine passion which sees in every man a brother and a potential child of the living God. By our life and our message we Christians must interpret God anew unto the world, the God who quickens our own soul. We need to bring the spirit of that God, through our own life, to bear upon the world.

What is our message? It is the same message once given to the seventy to whom the words of our text were spoken. For this was the heart of their message: "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." Let us thank God that the pulpits of our churches are ringing with that message today and that the hearts of our people are filled with the wistful prayer, "Thy kingdom come." The kingdom of God! Sometimes it has seemed to us that the expression is being abused, and that the message of the kingdom has an empty, hollow ring. "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." It was a present, a living Christ who sent out his disciples with that message. It was their message because he was with them,

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because he was in the world. He who alone was adequate for the needs of that day is still alone adequate for the needs of our day. And it is a present, living Christ who says to us today, "Behold I send you forth."

THE ELIJAH MOOD

A mood of discouragement has come upon many in the church today. Like Elijah they say "It is enough! Now, O Jehovah, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers." Their only hope lies in hastening to their own Mt. Horeb, waiting for a message from that God who comes not in the wind, nor the fire, but in the still small voice. Always he will ask the searching question "What doest thou here, Elijah?", but always too, he will send his own forth to new tasks with new courage, new strength and new assurance of victory. To some of us it seems indeed as though the vision of dry bones found in Ezekiel applies to the church of our day. And many echo the words of one of our younger American theologians, written to us in a letter the other day, "Where shall we turn for the authoritative word of God which will rouse us and bid us stand on our feet?" This mood can be overcome only by the consciousness that a living Lord says to us, "Behold, I send you forth."

The Master knew how sorely we would be tried when he added to his commission "Behold I send you forth," these words, "as lambs in the midst of wolves." Poor confused lambs! How confused and troubled and terribly afraid we often are amid all the perplexities of present day life! Let us be honest and admit it. But we take heart when we remember that one greater than ourselves shared this experience with us. Self-confident Peter could say "I will not be offended in thee. I will die with thee." Jesus, however, went out to pray. He needed God. He needed to say "My Father!" and find strength in communion with him. He was so sorely troubled that he appealed to his companions saying, "Watch with me."

WHOM GOD SENDS FORTH

There is no escape from failure, no deliverance from despair, excepting as we know ourselves utterly dependent upon God's help and then claim that help. To some of us it would seem as though in our day the message of the Christian pulpit has often been all too cock-sure. Men have talked glibly of a prophetic mission, when it was all too apparent that they really had not felt the hand of God laid upon them, that they had not heard the command "I send you forth. I will put into your mouth what you shall say," and that they had never known God as a consuming fire in their bones. Of course then their message could not be a message from God. Unless God has laid hold upon a life it is foreordained to failure. Alone the odds are against us. We are utterly dependent upon God. In his autobiography Lincoln Steffens pays high tribute to a preacher of San Francisco.

In the author's judgment politics in America are bad and big business worse. But worse than politics or business are the conventionally good. Only the man who knows himself to be a sinner has a real contribution to make to life. This preacher knew himself to be a sinner. His heart was filled with sympathy for the publicans and sinners of our day. He sought for himself the grace of God. He knew how much others stood in need of this same grace if their lives were to be saved from certain destruction.

"Behold I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves." We haven't much chance then, have we? I think just that is the glorious challenge we Christians have forgotten. We are not supposed to have a chance. That lamb among the wolves is doomed. The Christian is sent forth to be devoured. He is to lose his life to find it. Society must lose its life to find it. Our present order must lose its life, it must die, that men may live. Ponder this then. "I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves." If we discover what it means, if we are willing to challenge the world to that manner of living, if we are willing ourselves to enter more fully upon sacrificial living, our hope and the world's hope of a new day is not in vain. We will go our way as those who are sent with a life message. A dying world needs the message of a resurrection unto life.

Seeing the Halo

By Paul Seibert Leinbach

I saw an angel standing in the sun. Rev. 10:17.

ONE of our major prophets forcefully reminds us that the chief peril of our time is not intellectual scepticism, but rather moral cynicism—the disposition to sneer at spiritual verities. The cynic may know the market price of everything, but he knows the real value of nothing. Professing to be a devotee of science, he would, of course, laugh angels out of court as a scientific heresy or a relic of superstition. John, exiled on Patmos, says that he saw an angel standing in the sun. This was the vision of a seer. Only the poets and prophets of mankind have been able to see anything like that. It is a picture of the sacred in the secular, the supernatural in the natural, the spiritual in the material, the halo on what others call commonplace, the divinity in things—that divinity which underlies and explains them all.

This was the prayer of a great soul: "That for me life may never lose its halo!" We know how the artists have painted a halo of light around the head of Jesus. A halo is that ideal brightness with which faith and imagination invest an object of deep affection or tender sentiment. It is an appropriate suggestion; but it is even truer that *Jesus invested all life with a halo.* He called nothing commonplace. He walked the earth with reverent tread, with a sense of awe and wonder, of majesty and mystery. Everywhere and always he saw angels in the sun. "Now the natural man, who is carnally minded, receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Many people whose physical optics are sound may be blind as bats in the presence of spiritual realities; while others who live in physical darkness are every day seeing the glory of the Lord and hearing heavenly harmonies. "Do you see the same thing that I see?" It is a query often asked in jest. The answer is "No." In the last analysis, what you see depends upon what you are. "Blessed are the pure in heart," said Jesus, "for they shall see God."

I.

It is my conviction, a conviction deepening with the years, that the truly great souls among men are those who have eternity in their hearts; that the most militant and intolerant dogmatists on earth are those who sneer at the faith of their fellows; and that the supreme tragedy of life is to lose out of your personal experience the sense of God and of those spiritual values which alone can make life glorious. Those who do not see beyond the senses—far beyond reason, science and nature—are always to be pitied. Seeing nothing, they discount the visions of others, and too often engage in that devilish business which George Eliot described as "tearing down the altars of trust."

The church at Laodicea, for example, thought itself rich and in need of nothing; it did not know that it was wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. But to it came this message from the Spirit of God: "I counsel thee to buy eyesalve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see." Ah, yes, it takes anointed eyes to see the halo on the commonplace. The servant of God's prophet at Dothan was in a panic of fear; but the prophet prayed, "Lord, open the eyes of the young man, that he may see." And when his eyes were opened, he saw that the mountains were full of horses and chariots round about Elisha, and again the courage of victory filled his heart. This eyesalve we need is the illuminating grace of the Holy Spirit. With it, our young men shall again see visions and our old men dream dreams. Without it, we shall be blind materialists who come to think that the mystery of character, of love and hate, of ambition and devotion, may turn out to depend upon "the chemical action of obscure glands," and human existence may be regarded as a veritable dance of death.

II.

Do you see the halo—on the world of nature? It was said of one man, "The primrose by the river's brim, a yellow primrose was to him—and it was nothing more." Of another, it may be said that the loaf of snowy bread suggests to him the flour and grain, the sun and the rain, and the heavenly Father's love and care. The latter sees the angel standing in the sun—the bush that burns, and is not consumed. He beholds "tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything." He sees with Mrs. Browning that "Earth's crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God." He sings with Emerson:

> Let me go where'er I will,
> I hear a sky-born music still;
> It sounds from all things old,
> It sounds from all things young,
> From all that's fair, from all that's foul,
> Peals out a cheerful song.
> It is not only in the rose,
> It is not only in the bird,
> Not only where the rainbow glows,
> Nor in the song of women heard,
> But in the darkest, meanest things,
> There alway, alway something sings!

III.

Do you see the halo—on his Word—that other revelation of God? To the materialist it is only a book like other books, and nothing more; perchance a dull, uninteresting, inexplicable book. You remember how the Psalmist prayed: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." Only when we are spiritually illumined can we find in the holy scriptures treasures beyond all computation, glories unspeakable. Only then do we perceive the underlying meaning and essence of its incomparable truth. Only then do we appreciate that we are standing on holy ground, and we listen humbly and reverently for the message of God to our hearts.

IV.

Do you see the halo—on the flag of your country? To one man it is merely a rag, a mere piece of bunting or silk to be used for purposes of decoration or advertisement or, perchance, to promote a selfish cause or some vested interest. To another, it is a sacred symbol typical of all that is holiest in the aspirations and sacrifices of a

great nation, an ensign of justice, truth and international good will, before which he salutes with a thrill of patriotic fervor akin to religion. What you see in that flag determines the quality of your citizenship.

V.

Do you see the halo—on humanity? The materialist may look at a man, even at the best of men, and see but a clod, fashioned by "a fortuitous concourse of atoms."

Paul S. Leinbach

To some "strange god of mud and chance" he is willing to attribute the mind of a Shakespeare and the heart of a Christ. But how often we read this great word about the Master, "As Jesus passed by, he saw a man." Others might see only a dirty beggar filled with sores, or a tax gatherer glutted with graft; but as Jesus passed by, *he* saw a man. Some might say scornfully with Madame de Stael, "The more I see of men, the better I like my dog." But those with anointed eyes cannot look at a man without seeing a creature made in the image of God and after his likeness, who down beneath all his faults, failures and crimson crimes bears the marks of his divine origin, mission and destiny. Even as Michael Angelo saw the beautiful white angel in the rough block of marble, so Jesus perceived the divine spark in even the most unlovely and unlovable of men. So we must learn also to see in our brothers the ineffaceable halo which shall inspire reverence and sacred awe in our hearts. To those yet incapable of seeing something ineffably great in the last and the least of their fellows, we may well echo the query of the great artist: "Don't you wish you could?"

Especially do we call attention to a few classes in whom the spiritually minded must learn to behold the mystery and wonder of divinity in human form: 1. The child. Surely you ought to see the halo here. Cyprian, the old church father, said that he loved to touch the little children; they are so fresh from God, he said, and have the breath of heaven still upon them. If it be a solemn and significant thing to gaze upon one who has just departed this life, it is even more awe-inspiring to gaze upon "a little infant, newly born, whose tiny hands unconscious hold the keys of darkness or of morn." Who can stand before a child and recognize its possibilities for weal or woe, and fail to bow in awe and wonder before the mystery and glory of childhood! Horace Mann, the educator, pleading for the establishment of an eleemosynary institution in his state, was moved to cry, "It would be worth all the money in the treasury of Massachusetts if it would only save one boy." "Are you not making that too strong?" asked an opponent. "No," thundered Horace Mann, "not if it were *my* boy." But it is the genius of Christianity to see the halo not only on your own child, but on your neighbor's; not only on the pampered child of luxury, but on the waif of the city streets and slums. "Rome has gone on her conquering way," wrote Dr. Charles E. Jefferson, "because she has seen the value of a child." Graven on the wall of a great school is this truth which every Protestant should have written on his heart, "If you neglect the children, you are building on sand." Let us never forget that the wise men knelt at the manger in which a Babe was lying.

2. The alien. Can you see the angel in the sun when you look at the man of a different race and nation, so shut off from our hearts and homes by bias and bigotry? Alas, it has been hard for us to see the halo on these "strangers in a strange land"—all of them men and women for whom Christ died. How often we have looked at the Jew to see only his faults and to miss his essential greatness! How often we have neglected the lonesome, heartsick "foreigner" because we did not like the smell of garlic! How often we have looked at the Negro in such a way as to lose the human touch! How often we have been tempted to use terms of contempt and derision, like "Dago," "Sheeny," "Nigger" or "Wop"! How many of us who name the name of Christ have become the easy victims of racial pride and prejudice! Rest assured that if we fail to lift up these human brothers from whom we stand apart, they are bound to drag us down.

3. The outcast or prodigal. Must we not confess with shame that we have been all too ready to call him not only a backslider, but to describe him as belonging to the "riff-raff," the human derelicts, the "down-and-outers" who are "no good"; poor fools who have lost almost all semblance to humanity. Unlovely as that miserable fellow may seem when he stands unkempt and shivering in the bread-line, or perhaps behind the bars, you may yet find him to be a diamond in the rough, the sort of raw material out of which God can make a hero and a saint. Evangeline Booth said of her sainted father that he seemed to have "a new sort of eyes," different from those in any other man she had known. He had eyes, she declared, that enabled him to see a possible loveliness even in the worst bums and thieves and harlots of London; and because he had eyes

like that, he was able to lift up thousands out of the gutters of iniquity to become kings and priests unto God. Such faith in the salvability of human nature was the secret of the apostolic purpose, "that we may present every man perfect in Christ." What miracles of grace could yet be performed among us if we really believed the truth of the old hymn,

Down in the human heart, crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore;
Touched by a loving hand, weakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.

VI.

Do you see the halo—on yourself? It was said of a famous detective that "he found many others, but he never found himself; he detected many things, but he never detected that he himself had an immortal soul." How often it is true that the last thing men seem to discover is the possibility for good in their own hearts! They never find the better angels of their own nature. The first and worst of all frauds is to cheat one's self; all sin is easy after that. Have you discovered your own spiritual nature, the divine spark within which is struggling up into a living flame, the image of God in travail for a completer manifestation? William James, the philosopher, once said, "There is a tune that is always singing in the back of my mind. Indefinite and faint it may for the most part be—and yet I know that, if it should cease, there would be a great hush, an awful void in my life." That tune is the call of your heavenly Father to his beloved. Ah, my brother, my sister, you do not see yourself as you are, until you see yourself as one whom God loves and claims for himself—now and forevermore.

VII.

Do you see the halo—on Jesus? Have you beheld the glory of your Lord? Do you know him to be the one altogether lovely, more to be desired than all other treasures, the pearl of great price? You have not seen him as he really is unless you have surrendered to him gladly and absolutely, and cried from your heart, "My Lord and my God!" I challenge you again to study his life, and thus let him authenticate himself to you. That is the best way to recover faith in God and man, the only way to get a satisfying answer to all the questions of your mind and heart. He is the companion you need for life's journey. In his light you shall see light. In the school of Christ alone can you learn to see the angels that are worth seeing. In no modern verse have I seen this better expressed than in the lovely words of Harry Kemp:

He comes to break the barriers down, raised up by barren creeds;
Across the globe from zone to zone like sunlight he proceeds;
He comes to give the world's starved heart the perfect love it needs.

The Christ, whose friends oft played him false, whom dogmas have belied,
Still speaking to the hearts of men, though shamed and crucified—
The Master of the centuries, who will not be denied!

How Religion Gets Us into Trouble

By A. Wehrli

"Then the presidents and the satraps sought to find occasion against Daniel as touching the kingdom; but they could find no occasion nor fault, forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. Then said these men, we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it gainst him concerning the law of his God." Daniel 6:4-5.

"And when Elijah saw that, he arose and went for his life and came to Beersheba which belongeth to Judah and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper-tree, and he requested for himself that he might die, and said: It is enough." I Kings 19:3-4.

SPEAKING of the first-century Christians a St. Louis minister, in a recent article, remarked: "Their conduct was evident to all but their worship was private, behind closed doors." Speaking of ourselves in contrast, he said: "With us, worship is nearly always public, and conduct usually a private matter." With this aid to our thinking we come upon the two ways in which religion registers its impact upon life. When religion has vitality at all it comes noticeably either into the conduct or into the worship of its devotees. Obviously much that passes for religiousness is neither serious nor consecutive enough to make any impression whatever upon life nor is it robust enough to create any kind of impact upon the surrounding world. But where religion is in dead earnest and an ever present concern it lays hold upon the ongoing life about it and influences that life for good or for evil.

The two excerpts from the scriptures, with which we began, illustrate the two ways admirably. The first quotation, from the story of Daniel, exhibits to us classically the man whose religion got into his conduct. The second, from the story of Elijah, just as admirably displays to us the man for whom religion expressed itself primarily in worship, for whom at any rate religion had not yet been significantly focused upon conduct. Both men were in dead earnest religiously and therefore forced their surroundings to reckon with them.

First of all, their religion got both of them into trouble, Daniel in one way, Elijah in another. That is the perennial fate of the serious religionist whether his religiousness expresses itself essentially in conduct or articulates itself specifically in worship. Trouble is logically the lot of both types, though the kind of trouble peculiar to each differs widely and the sort of people and things they get into trouble with are as opposite as north and south.

I.

Daniel got into trouble in the same manner that the first-century Christians did, and for the same reasons. Publicly, like theirs, his religion expressed itself essentially in conduct. Like theirs "his conduct was open to all but his worship was private." Even as they were,

he was ostracised, persecuted and subjected to martyrdom. Of them it was said, "that they owed no man anything, had all things common, gave to him that was in need and that they loved one another." Of Daniel the narrative relates that he was "distinguished above the presidents and the satraps because an excellent spirit was in him, that they could find no occasion nor fault, for as much as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him." In each of these instances we have before us the classic description of behavior-centered religion, with all its visible excellence embodied in conduct. In both cases worship is vitally affirmed and even artlessly described, yet entirely without any pompous celebration of its specifics of belief or ritualistic practice. It is present, and of tremendous import and effect, yet chastely nurtured and hidden as it were within life's inner shrine.

Elijah (in this particular narrative) got into trouble very much like the majority of modern Christians do, and for very similar reasons. The emphasis of his religion in the Jehovah vs. Baal controversy rested upon such worship questions as: "Which God is the real God?" "Which religion is *the* religion?" That kind of question has been and still is, more than the Christian world realizes, the chief recipe from which the troubles of modern Christianity have been brewed. Like ours Elijah's religious genius went largely into public worship, and conduct was decidedly a secondary matter. Even as we are, though happily for us with just a bit more of vehemence, he was beset on all sides by denominational antagonists, harassed by sectarian opposition and driven from the field by the power and the glitter of an older and more easily demonstrable tradition. Of him it was said that he was "very jealous for Jehovah, that he ran for his life" from an apparently overwhelming opposition, and that "he requested for himself that he might die" while on his way to the last stronghold of his belief, to Sinai, where pathetically he claimed to be the only real one left. Of us on the whole it can likewise be said, that we are very loyal to our respective communions, that we cling desperately to institutional self-preservation and that we run home to God with our particular excellencies. Again, in each of these instances we see before our eyes the pertinent character of sect-centered religion, the consuming genius of which has gone largely into a public display of its doctrine and worship. And yet in neither case is the importance of right conduct denied nor its necessary cultivation disparaged. In fact the "walking in his sight" is quite generally assumed, and impressively taken for granted. But just there, with the vital and creative emphasis elsewhere, conduct is most effectively neglected and quite tragically though unconsciously lost sight of.

II.

The Daniels and the Elijahs of all time have always got into trouble, they are constantly getting into trouble now and they will continue to get into trouble as long as there is a future; the Daniels with the forces and principalities of wickedness and the Elijahs with other religionists. The Daniels will continue to strengthen the hands of righteousness, to buoy up the hopes of the oppressed and to confuse the forces of sin. The Elijahs will continue to obscure the causes of justice and righteousness, to perpetuate "all creation's groaning," to embitter and estrange the spirits of those who suffer at the hands of their privileged brothers and to go on with the confusion of the saints. A religion inspired by worship and issuing in right conduct will produce adherents whose lives are at once humanly helpful and ethically unassailable, it will rekindle a faith that is both clear and pure. But a religion implemented only with a worship gone self-conscious will beget largely such devotees as "feel not another's woe," whose conduct is vulnerable and often reprehensible and whose faith may become that of the inquisition. A religion like Daniel's will ever bring clarity to the confused vision of kings and rulers and is destined to save human society. A religion like that of the undisciplined Elijah is incapable of bringing light into the darkness of men's hands and will always, in spite of its genuine zeal, be instrumental in encouraging bigotry and bloodshed.

Reflexively also the two types of religion work in contrasted ways upon those who respectively practice them. Daniel's religion had a decided effect upon Daniel's character, as did Elijah's upon his character. In Daniel it created poise, in Elijah panic. In Daniel it produced calm, in Elijah terror. For Daniel it resulted in a steady unshakable power, for Elijah in fitful alternative spasms of courage and fear. When Daniel learned of the plot against him he simply "went home to his house," where "the windows were regularly open toward Jerusalem," and "thanked God, as beforetime." When Elijah received the threatening message from Queen Jezebel "he went for his life," across the border and wailed to God on the subject of religion's futility. Characteristically the religion which rises to visibility in terms of unassailable conduct is automatically possessed of the stuff it takes to face life's crises "in scorn of consequence." Similarly the religion which manifests itself solely at the point of correct worship or proper belief possesses no inherent resources against the day of trouble. Besides it is extremely sensitive to personal consequences. And logically enough it is the first type that can never really be defeated, though it may be subjected to the most terrible suffering. Even so the second type can never really be victorious though it usually escapes suffering unscathed.

III.

By a strange paradox Elijah's religion is finally judged and ultimately defeated on the basis of its conduct while Daniel's religion is eventually persecuted because of its worship. According to the respective narratives Elijah murdered 850 Baal priests (a procedure such as no religion has yet been able to justify on any basis). That was his conduct breach. Daniel prayed to a forbidden God at the wrong time. That was his worship crime. Thus in reality worship is judged by the conduct it engenders or permits. On the other hand right conduct can be persecuted only on the ground of trumped-up charges from another realm. Nowhere is the latter truth so clearly discernible as in the record of the sufferings of Jesus. Jesus was criticized, not because he healed the sick, but because he did it on the Sabbath; maligned, not because he drove out demons,

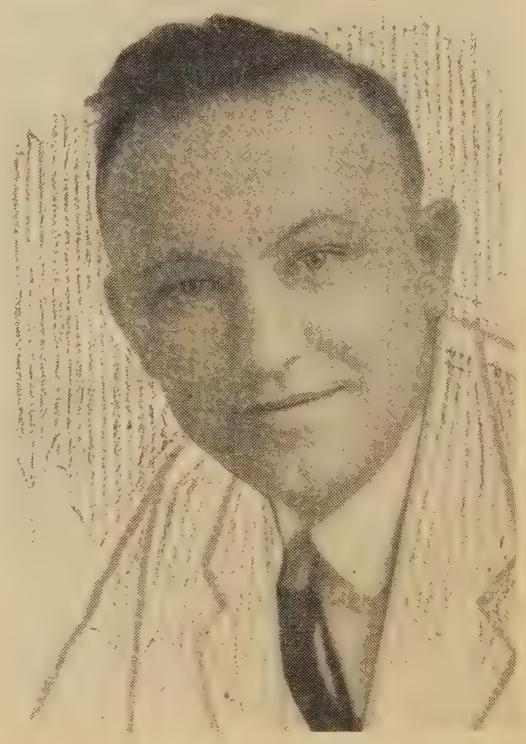
but because it was possible to claim that he did it by the power of Beelzebub. And finally he was put to death, not so much on account of the things he did but because his teaching was demonstrated to be in conflict with the accepted law and tradition. His religion far outstripped that of his enemies who were content to tithe mint anise and cummin and to neglect the weightier matters of justice, mercy and love. But that was not the charge upon which he was condemned and executed. He was crucified, not because of his conduct which had been open and without reproach, but because of his worship, much of which had been private, misunderstood and misrepresented.

IV.

Is there no hope then for an age in which religion has drifted so far from ethics and which has contented itself so largely with the assumption that good conduct follows automatically in the wake of an elaborated and a widely exhibited worship? Is there nothing of potential value in the zeal and the earnestness of the Elijah mood, which, though it flees the scene at the point of crisis, has nevertheless been vital enough to precipitate that crisis? And must the Christian church go on multiplying theological Mt. Carmels in the very face of their accumulated futility? The answers respectively to these questions are: Yes! yes! and no! For it is precisely at the point of the breakdown of Elijah religion that an Elijah becomes receptive to the persuasion of "the still small voice." Out of the turmoil of "earthquake, wind and fire" in which, though sought, Jehovah was not found comes the promise of a redirected religious energy, now long misguided, and of a revived influence against which the very "gates of hell shall not prevail."

Speaking colloquially, Elijah, though misguided, is yet too good a man to be abandoned by Jehovah. And a really good man, though he be temporarily off his course, is always superior to any kind of bad man, whatever the latter's expedient accomplishments may be. Elijah, honest, earnest and crushed by God himself is redeemable. He may be far in the wake of Daniel, yet he can be turned in Daniel's direction and with the old energy magnificently rekindled he may yet make vital progress along the new road. Thus the religion of our time though long engrossed in questions of proper worship and weakened by denominational strife may yet be permitted to find new life in the realm of conduct and be privileged to proclaim that "justice shall roll down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream."

If then exhortation is still a legitimate function of sermonizing let us exhort each other diligently to choose the kind of religion that gets into conduct rather than that which confines itself to worship. May we by mutual encouragement nourish our spirits upon the example of Daniel rather than upon that of Elijah. Or more accurately, having analyzed ourselves, as Elijah religionists, shall we not now vigorously turn our footsteps toward the task at Naboth's vineyard. In near despair, we too are fleeing from Carmel to Sinai, seeking earnestly to find there divine redirection and strengthening. In the past our Elijah religion has gotten us into serious trouble with our fellow-Christians and we have run away in fear from the final consequences of that struggle. But for the future with our vision cleared and our strength revived we can face the new troubles that confront us in Jezreel with a greater measure of fortitude and with no fear of final defeat. We shall join the battle with the forces of evil and not fight on against our brothers.



A. Wehrli

V.

As intimated above one of the areas of life to which a vital religion must vigorously point its ethic is that of social relations. Daniel-like the church of God must demonstrate the brotherliness of its essential character and like Elijah it must courageously address itself to the behavior of the Ahabs of our time regardless of their religious affiliation or non-affiliation. After the pattern of John Wesley the church must tackle the world with all its institutions and corporations clearly proclaiming: "The world is my parish." It dares not invert the task and blandly continue to accept the parish as its circumscribed world. The coal fields, the lead belts, the Imperial Valleys belong to the bounty which God bestowed upon his children. All shall share therein, including those who live and work there.

Again an especially pertinent interest of present-day religion is the achievement of peace on earth. Here too the lines between the forces that make for peace and those that make for war are becoming more clearly drawn. Almost daily new and hitherto unexpected allies for the cause of peace are finding each other while at the same time fresh and until now unsuspected enemies are periodically being exposed. So too the urgency for nations to put up their swords is becoming more pronounced. Nowhere then in the contemporary picture

is religion's duty and opportunity to influence the conduct of nations more apparent than in the matter of war and peace.

Perhaps the greatest obstacles on the road to peace are the unfortunate connotations that have grown up around the concept of patriotism. With theoretical vehemence our foremost patrioteers protest that their supreme efforts are in the direction of world peace. Yet the fatal practicality of all their works lead most effectively in the direction of war. Until the church of Jesus Christ realizes the truth of this situation and accepts the challenge therein implied it will not inject one iota of the religious spirit into the conduct of nations. Instead it will continue with the fervor of Carmel to burn incense to the ritual of patriotism and to offer sacrifice in the worship of nationalism. In a day such as ours when the temper of the various nations resembles that of a Billy-goat it becomes a crime for any one of them to lean far forward.

Nor are the areas above alluded to the only ones in which religion must focus upon conduct. There are others, though fortunately it is neither possible nor necessary to take account of them all in this discourse. However, even as did Alexander, religion must ever be on the lookout for more worlds to conquer, new areas of life, not necessarily geographical, in which to proclaim and to demonstrate that "man to man shall be a brother." Finally too lest we forget, the kind of religion that gets itself expressed in conduct will bring with it its own type as well as its share of trouble for those who live it. Yet the tribulation is not unto death, for death and the world have been overcome by that kind of religion before and shall be again and again.

Power and Personality

By Charles E. Schaeffer

I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. 2 Kings 18:23.

HERE we have at once a big offer and a large order. The Biblical setting is one of those decisive historical events that occasionally meet us in the pages of the sacred record. The king of Assyria, through one of his officials, is parleying with the king of Judah for the surrender of the capitol city, Jerusalem. The diplomat is resorting to various schemes to induce Hezekiah to yield and to enter into an alliance with Assyria in order to invade and crush Egypt lying to the southwest. When Hezekiah remains firm in his neutrality, supported by the counsel of the youthful prophet Isaiah, the Assyrian proffers bribes and hostages. Among other things he offers him 2,000 horses on condition that he furnish the riders to sit upon them. That, of course, was a tempting offer, for 2,000 horses in warfare are not lightly to be rejected.

From the days of David the horse was popular in Palestine. Its use, however, was reserved almost exclusively for war and military purposes. No ordinary civilian in those days was allowed to go astride a horse. Only kings and military men were entitled to horses. Thus the horse became the symbol of power. It also became the symbol of wealth. A man's wealth and social standing were measured by the number and quality of horses in his stable. The horse, likewise, became the symbol of fleetness, of pleasure, of pride and beauty. While the horse has been largely supplanted by the machine, we still speak of "horsepower" when we wish to guage the capacity or strength of any natural or mechanical force. Two thousand horses thus become a symbol of power and the riders that are to be set upon them are human personalities. The horse and the rider are symbols of power and personality.

THE AGE OF POWER

Ours is the age of power. When James Watts built the first steam engine and when Benjamin Franklin put a copper bit into the mouth of the lightning, a new deal was effected in the world's civilization. Muscular power was supplanted by mechanical power. The age of machinery had come. This was, perhaps the greatest revolution in civilization. The use of machinery has brought about mighty changes in the world's history. There has never been such power available as there is today. We have harnessed the forces of nature and made them do our bidding.

Of course, the machine is only the projection of our physical powers. What is a telescope whereby we scan the distant vistas of the universe, but a larger eye? What is a microscope whereby we discern the minutest particles of matter, but an intenser eye? What is the telephone but a larger ear and a bigger mouth? What is a cannon with a ball in it, but a longer arm and a heavier fist? What is an automobile but swifter legs?

The machine has shifted the center of values. It has unduly exalted the mechanical. Plato, in his "Ideal Republic" divides human society into three major classes. Into the first group he puts preachers, poets, philosophers, professors, who dwell largely in the realm of the ideal. Into the second group he puts warriors, soldiers, statesmen, politicians, men who preserve the state, the nation. Then into the third group, which he calls a "negligible lot" he puts artisans, carpenters, mechanics.

MASTERS OF MACHINES

But if we today were to classify human society into three groups, whom would we place in the first? Surely not preachers, not professors, nor poets. We would most likely reverse the order and put into first place the masters in the realm of machinery, the captains of industry, capitalists and financiers. Into the second group we would put some of our statesmen, the president of the United States, some of our generals and admirals, some of our great political leaders. And then we would have a third group, which we too might call a "negligible lot" and into it we would put the men and women who live and move and have their being in the ideal, the intangible, the invisible—the dreamers, the mystics, the philosophers, the theologians, the poets and prophets. It all goes to show what a revolutionary change has come over the human race by the advent of mechanical power.

Not only is the horse the symbol of power but also the symbol of property, of wealth. One of the characteristic features of modern civilization is the excessive

emphasis which is being placed upon money. We are money mad. We rush after gain like hunters after game. Our standards of value are nearly all measured in the coin of the realm. The dollar has become our god, our golden rule is the rule of gold. "Things are in the saddle and they are riding men." Most men have no higher ambition in life than to make money. Money is power. It is coined personality, but when it possesses us it will eventually prove our undoing. It is this lust of greed, this craze for cash that has brought about our present debacle. The trouble has been not a scarcity of money, but a superabundance of it. America is twice over the richest republic on the face of the earth. The per capita wealth in America far exceeds that of any other country. The trouble is that we have not been able to use money rightly. Our money is getting the better of us.

Again, the horse is the symbol of pleasure. We are a pleasure-intoxicated people. Our philosophy of life, if it is not wholly materialistic, is at least epicurean. If the meaning of life does not find its satisfaction in the wielding of power, or in the possession of things, it is sought in the pursuit of happiness. Modern society is organized for pleasure. We must have fun and frolic. The tempo of modern life demands relaxation and recreation. With our nerves beaten to a frazzle, we crave the stimulus of amusement. Consequently our movies, our sports, our pleasure parks, our excursions, our autos, our demand for leisure—are running away with us.

NO TIME FOR PESSIMISM

All these things are offered to us today—power, speed, wealth, pleasure and beauty. What a world this is in which we are living! What a glorious thing it is to be living at this very hour! This is not the day for the croaking pessimist, not for the black raven that is perched above some chamber door; this is the day for the joyful optimist, for the red-breasted robin, the harbinger of springtime.

The horse is waiting for the rider. Plutarch tells us that one day they led a spirited animal before Philip, the father of Alexander the Great. No one was able to mount him. Philip ordered him away. The youthful Alexander, standing by, asked why they were leading such a good horse away. They replied because no one could mount him. Whereupon Alexander, seeing that the horse was afraid of his own shadow, turned his face towards the sun, gently fixed the bridle, diverted the horse's attention, and suddenly leaped astride him, pulled up the reins, spurred him on and in a short time came around the circle the master of the steed. Everybody applauded him and his father with tears in his eyes said, "One who can master a horse like that deserves as his reward the kingdom of Macedon."

The rider is more important than the horse. What would two thousand horses profit us if we are unable to put riders upon them? "A horse is a vain thing for safety." The making of personality is of greater importance than the manufacturing of machinery. A man is worth more than a sheep, more than a horse, more than a machine. Rudyard Kipling tells the story of a Scotch engineer who, after sailing all the seas of the world, brought his old boat home, saying these words:

We're creepin' on wi' each new rig, less weight and larger power;
There'll be the loco-boiler next and thirty knots an hour!
Thirty and more; but what I hae seen since ocean steam began
Leaves me nae doot for the machine, but what about the man?

Ah—there's the rub! The machine is perfect, the power is here, but who can handle effectively the engines of our modern civilization?

A STRANGE ANOMALY

The greatest need is not horsepower, but manpower. The tragedy of our civilization is that while we have made these gigantic and unprecedented strides in the development of mechanical power we have not made the corresponding progress in the development of personality. Our estimate upon human personality hardly compares with the value which we attach to material and mechanical things. There is today a strange anomaly, a peculiar paradox regarding man. The new humanism is an undue exaltation of man, making man in the language of the ancient philosopher, "the measure of all things." But while some of our modern psychologists and behaviorists are putting man on this lofty pedestal, there is in the world of affairs a lamentable disregard of human personality. Never was life so cheap, never were there so many suicides, homicides, murders. In our industrial scheme man is regarded as a mere tool, he is a "hand" in a factory, bearing not a name but a number. He is a pawn upon a chessboard, not a person in civilized society. The American nation was founded upon the principle that the individual citizen is supreme, that government exists

Charles E. Schaeffer

of the people, by the people and for the people. But in modern government the individual exists for the state. Undue nationalism always plays havoc with human personality. The significance, the importance, the value of personality must be restored in our philosophy of life. Into a highly mechanized civilization it behooves us to thrust highly intellectualized and consecrated personalities who can control, guide and direct available power.

POWER OF PERSONALITY

Our schemes of recovery can never adequately succeed by tinkering only with the machinery. Neither capitalism nor communism, nor facism, nor socialism can ever succeed without the human factor. As long as we have selfish, acquisitive men and women, the economic system, no matter what it is, is bound to fail. The code cannot conquer. The recovery will come only through regenerated personalities. Great is the power of personality. In the morning of time, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy the voice of the Creator rang out: "Let us make man in our image." And he gave him dominion over all things. "Subdue it," he says as he points him to the sea, and man builds his navies and floats his iron palaces on the water. "Subdue it," he says, as he points him to the lightning, and man tames its fire and makes it the invisible and fleet-footed force of his message. "Subdue them," he says, as he points him to the elements, and man makes the winds his messengers and the world becomes a whispering gallery. Only as we obey this original mandate and control the forces of the world instead of allowing ourselves to be controlled by them, can we really enter into our inheritance. Every great movement to be effective must incarnate itself in some great personality. Therefore, the world always waits for the man, for its messiah. In the mists of time there rises the supreme personality of history. "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory." He revealed to us not only God but also man. In him we discover our real selves. We call him master and so indeed he was. Follow him! If we catch his spirit we too shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us. This is the crowning achievement of personality—to be like Jesus.

In the book of Revelation the seer of Patmos gives us a vision of redeemed society. "And behold, I saw in heaven a white horse and he that sat upon it was called faithful and true. And he had upon his vesture a name written: 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords.'" In that new day for which we are all longing, holiness shall be written upon the bells of the horses, power shall be consecrated, property shall be spiritualized and pleasure sanctified, if the rider is faithful and true.

My final word must be directed more definitely to those who have here finished their academic and theological studies and who are about to venture forth upon life's mission. For you life holds many problems and many opportunities. You go forth to help to rebuild human society. If you go into business, into politics, into education, into any vocation of life, seek to bring it under the control of the highest motives and purposes and pervade it by the spirit of Jesus Christ. And those of you who go out as heralds of the gospel of God—what a great opportunity is yours! The world waits for your message. The day of the preacher is not ended, it is just dawning. You are casting in your lot with the great leaders of the world in every age, and it is yours to help to build a new world wherein dwelleth righteousness. Life's meaning is found along two roads, paradoxical as they may seem. The one is self realization. Make the most of yourself, of your life. Live it to the full. The other is self dedication. Give thyself. The Greek had as his motto—"Know thyself." The Roman—"Control thyself." The Christian—"Give thyself." Life finds its meaning, its fulfillment in Christ-like service. This is the Christian philosophy of life and this alone makes life radiant and worth while.

Life with golden trumpet calls you—
Hark! her summons thrills the sky!

Verse

Cloth-of-Gold

OH who would tire of earthly life,
And who would fretted be,
If all the days could be illumed
By beauty's minstrelsy!

So I shall take the pleasant things,
And every petty wrong,
And weave them into cloth-of-gold,
And weaving, breathe a song.

And no event shall miss my loom,
Or joy or sorrow bringing;
When death itself demands a place
I'll weave it in, still singing.

THOMAS CURTIS CLARK.

The Trees of Home

THE trees of home are bending
As if to fold down
The little houses befriending
The folk of my town.

The trees are growing taller,
Their branches wide,
And the number of friends, smaller—
So many have died.

Yet each tree barely sighing
Caresses all,
Forgetting living and dying,
The Spring and the Fall.

RAYMOND KRESENSKY.

WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE

Evangelical Synod

Rev. H. RICHARD NIEBUHR *is associate professor of Christian ethics in the Yale Divinity School. He is the author of "The Social Sources of Denominationalism," a book which gives a new direction to the study of American church history, and has translated Tillich's volume, "The Religious Situation."*

President of Eden Theological seminary since 1925, SAMUEL DAVID PRESS *has taught theology in this institution since 1908. He studied at the Universities of Berlin and Chicago, and received the degree of doctor of theology from the university of Halle in 1925. Before entering the teaching profession he held several pastorates in churches of the Evangelical Synod in Texas.*

Pastor of the First English Evangelical church of Chicago for twenty-three years, Rev. LOUIS WILLIAM GOEBEL *holds many positions of trust within his communion. Of one of these however, he describes himself as "inordinately proud." That is his chairmanship of the commission on church union of the Evangelical synod. The fact that this commission had led the denomination to effect a successful merger with the Reformed Church in the United States gives him reason for gratification. He is also chairman of the board of directors of Eden Theological seminary, St. Louis.*

After four years of service to a mission church in Portland, Oregon, Rev. A. WEHRLI *was engaged as a teacher at Eden Theological Seminary in 1920, where with the exception of one year, he has taught in the Old Testament department ever since. Eden is the institution which numbers among its well known contemporary graduates the brothers Niebuhr: Reinhold of Union and Richard of Yale.*

Rev. REINHOLD NIEBUHR *is professor of Christian ethics in Union Seminary, New York. His most recent book is "Reflections on the End of an Era." He was formerly pastor of the Bethel Evangelical church of Detroit.*

Reformed Church

The present pastor of the Salem Reformed Church of Allentown, Pennsylvania is Rev. WILLIAM F. KOSMAN, *who follows a long line of distinguished ministers in that pulpit. Among Dr. Kosman's predecessors are Rev. George W. Richards, Rev. Theodore F. Herman and Rev. J. M. G. Darms. Dr. Kosman is a member of the executive committee of the Reformed church and also sits on its board of foreign missions. He contributes frequently to the Reformed Church Messenger.*

Rev. E. G. HOMRIGHAUSEN *is pastor of the Carrollton Avenue Reformed church of Indianapolis and a staff correspondent of The Christian Century. He translated a book of Barthian sermons entitled, "Come Holy Spirit." Dr. Homrighausen is a convinced exponent of Barthian ideas. He lectures in theology in the school of religion in Butler University, a Disciples institution of Indianapolis.*

Rev. PAUL S. LEINBACH *is the editor of the Reformed Church Messenger of Philadelphia and president of the Editorial Council of the religious press of America. He is a member of the Federal Council's executive committee and of the executive committee and board of trustees of the International Council of Religious Education. His breadth of interest is shown by the fact that he is also a member of the American Society of Church History, American Academy of Political and Social Science and the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts.*

Rev. CHARLES E. SCHAEFFER, *president of the Home Missions Council of America, is general secretary of the board of home missions of the Reformed church. He is secretary of the Federal Council's commission on evangelism and author of "Our Home Mission Work" and "Glimpses into Hungarian Life." He is past president of the general synod of the Reformed church in the United States, and has been connected with its home missions board for twenty-six years. Dr. Schaeffer lives in Philadelphia.*

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

OSCAR E. MAURER, Center (Congregational), New Haven, Conn. "What is our Part?" Deut. 8:17—"My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth." Isa. 64:8—"We are the clay and thou art the potter." I Cor. 3:9—"We are God's fellow-workers."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

Title of sermon

.....

Text used (Write out the text)

.....

Name of minister

.....

Name of church

.....

Address

FRED E. FRANKSON, First Methodist Episcopal, Green Bay, Wis. "The Christian's Inferiority Complex." Matt. 8:8a—"—Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof."

HOWARD B. WARREN, First Methodist Episcopal, Ansonia, Conn. "The Approaching Dawn." Num. 14:9—"Fear not: the Lord is with us."

D. B. BLACKSTONE, Oak's Corners Presbyterian, Oak's Corners, N. Y. "Wanted—Men." Jer. 5:1—"Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man,—."

WILLIAM H. EVANS, First Methodist Episcopal, Belvidere, Ill. "The Divine Answer to Human Questions." John 1:4—"In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THIS ISSUE of The Pulpit is a celebration of the event of the month—the union of two denominations, the Evangelical Synod (not to be confused with the Evangelical Church) and the Reformed Church in the United States (not to be confused with the Reformed Church in America). Of the eight sermons herein, four represent each of the constituent bodies. The union has been advanced from stage to stage during several years, the final stage being reached last month (June) when the two bodies came into formal unity at Cleveland, Ohio. Between these two groups there exist affinities and conditions which make their union a logical one. Both carry on the tradition of German Protestantism. The Reformed Church is the older, dating back to colonial days when German immigrants settled in Pennsylvania at the invitation of William Penn. Their strength is still greatest in Pennsylvania with a considerable overflow in Ohio, Virginia and North Carolina. The Evangelical Synod was organized in Missouri, in 1840, and represents a later wave of German immigration. Its constituency resides chiefly in Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. Thus, geographically, there is little if any overlapping in local communities. The united membership will number over 900,000 of which the Reformed group contributes nearly 475,000 and the Evangelical group 437,000. Both denominations have a Calvinistic heritage, both are ardently evangelical in spirit, and both are alive to the value of subordinating their German tradition to the vital requirements of life in contemporary America. The merger takes place upon a very simple doctrinal basis. It has been negotiated in the spirit of great generosity and consummated with such virtual unanimity that the public attention usually drawn to such projects by the element of sharp controversy involved has not been as great as the importance of the event deserved.

Two Denominations Become One Body

The Book of the Month

A FREE SOCIETY, *by Horace M. Kallen. Robert O. Ballou, New York. $1.00.*

I HAVE lately become interested in the consumers' cooperative movement. It is a belated interest, and I am ashamed of my longtime ignorance. But this little book by Dr. Kallen opened my eyes, and while as yet I see men only as trees walking, it is something to see even that well! The author makes you not quite so sure that your orthodox socialism is an adequate or practicable method of organizing economic life. The trouble with socialism is its bureaucratic control—the burden of administering a planned economy is too great for either human intelligence or human character to carry, and can be maintained only by a dictatorship of some kind. Dr. Kallen seeks for a system which reduces bureaucratic control to the minimum; a system, that is to say, whose control is inherent in the actual operating of the system. Under capitalism, the producer controls production and distribution for his own profit, with the wretched results we are now experiencing. The trouble with capitalism is that it is a *producers'* system; we need a *consumers'* system. The consumers' organizations which now exist in many countries are but initial steps toward the fulfilment of this idea. The author's "free society" calls for a re-making of the political structure as well as the economic, so that the state itself will become the clearing house of economic forces and interests through a bi-cameral legislature—one house representing the producers as such, the other representing the consumers. I feel that this conception is a more promising combination of justice and freedom than any plan of social organization that is now before us.

A Thought for the Month

THE HUE AND CRY against the passing of "rugged individualism" arises from the fact that under capitalism our whole culture is permeated and overshadowed by economic necessity. Everything must have a cash value. Prosperity is God. Life consists in making a living. Economic striving begins in childhood, and extends to old age. The entire pattern of our existence is woven by our economic needs. Naturally, then, when it is proposed that this economic system be shifted from a basis of unrestrained individualism to a basis of social control, the cry arises that life is being regimented and that freedom is being repressed. The truth is the exact opposite. Economic discipline has as its aim the emancipation of the spirit of man from the deadening slavery in which our acquisitive society has bound us all. Science and invention have brought human society to the point where the problem of making a living need no longer fill the whole temple of life. Marxian doctrine of economic determinism does not apply to a civilization equipped with modern knowledge and machinery. It has been computed that all the essential work of a society like ours can be done by that portion of the population between the ages of 18 and 26—leaving the rest of us to pursue the higher goals of life in freedom from economic care. Our task, then, is to bring the economic order into a narrower zone rather than allow it to occupy the whole horizon of man's life. If discipline under social control is necessary in order to achieve this result it will be the best bargain humanity has ever made. For such economic discipline will spell spiritual and cultural freedom for men, who live not by bread alone, but by every word—art, disinterested friendship, pursuit of knowledge, recreation, religion—that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

Freedom Through Social Discipline

Charles Clayton Morrison

The August Number of the Christian Century Pulpit Will be a Special

Reformed Church in America

number, featuring sermons by the leading ministers of the denomination. Every minister listed in the Reformed Church in America year book was asked to select—by ballot—the ministers whom he would choose to represent his fellowship in the special Reformed Church in America number of The Christian Century Pulpit, to be published in August. The following ministers were selected by their own brethren as the preachers of the month:

EDWARD DAWSON
Acquackanonk Reformed Church,
Passaic, New Jersey

JOHN A. DYKSTRA
Central Reformed Church,
Grand Rapids, Michigan

MILTON J. HOFFMAN
New Brunswick Theological Seminary,
New Brunswick, New Jersey

MALCOM JAMES MacLEOD
Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas,
New York, N. Y.

NORMAN V. PEALE
Marble Collegiate Church,
New York, N. Y.

DANIEL POLING
Editor, Christian Herald

The Reformed Church in America Number is the fourth of a series of denominational numbers which are being published from time to time. The BAPTIST number was published in January; the CONGREGATIONAL-CHRISTIAN number in April; and the EVANGELICAL-REFORMED number in July. Other denominational numbers for the Methodists (both North and South), Epicopalians, Disciples, Presbyterians, (North and South), Lutherans, etc., will be published in forthcoming issues of The Christian Century Pulpit.

(Note: Copies of any, or all, of these special denominational numbers are available at 25 cents per copy.)

The September Number will be a regular number, undenominational in character, featuring sermons by seven outstanding ministers, on subjects appropriate to the season; also a "Preacher Problem" article; "Titles and Texts;" and the many other regular features of the Pulpit.

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